

# Meeting Minutes of the Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction

6 February 2003 from 10:00am-12:00pm, White House Conference Center, Eisenhower Room

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Names of absent members are indicated in italics.

## Officers

Helen Wood (NOAA), Chair  
John Filson (USGS), Vice-Chair for Science  
Margaret Lawless (FEMA), Vice-Chair for Policy

## Working Group Chairs

### Remote Sensing Applications Working Group

Rosalind Helz (USGS), Co-Chair  
*Steve Ambrose (NASA), Co-Chair*

### International Working Group

Larry Roeder, Jr./*Fernando Echavarria (State), Co-Chair*  
*Larry Weber (NSF), Co-Chair*

## Designated Representatives

### CDC

Josephine Malilay

### DOD

Earnest Paylor

### EPA

Peter Jutro

### FEMA

Margaret Lawless

### FERC

*Dan Mahoney*

### HUD

*John Kennedy*

Kevin Sheehan (alternate)

### NASA

*Steve Ambrose*

### NIST

*Shyam Sunder*

Noel Raufaste (alternate)

### NOAA

Helen Wood

### NRO

Keith Fennell

### NSF

Priscilla Nelson

### OHS

*Bill Jeffrey*

### OMB

Erin McCartney

Gary Reisner

Jason Freihage

### OSTP

Gene Whitney

### State

*Fernando Echavarria*

Larry Roeder, Jr.

### USACE

*Michael O'Connor*

### USCG

*Ernesto Montijo*

### USFS

Sue Conard

### US Public Health Office

*Eric Noji*

### USGS

Tim Cohn

## Other Attendees

### DOT

K. Thirumalai

### NIMA

Heidi Smith

### NOAA

Chris Lewis (NESDIS/IA)

Darci Glass-Royal (GRS)

Dori Akerman (GRS)

John Gaynor (USWRP)

Mary Newton (NWS)

Michael Hales (NESDIS/IA)

Peter Colohan (GRS)

### NRO

Duane Snow

### NSF

Robert O'Connor

### USGS

Kathleen Gohn

Rosalind Helz

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## Agenda

10:00 Welcome and Introductions  
10:05 Approval of Summary from Last Meeting  
10:10 Report from the Chair  
10:20 Report from the OSTP Liaison  
10:30 Working Group: International  
10:45 Working Group: Remote Sensing Applications  
11:00 Document to Supplement FY04 Budget  
11:20 Briefing, NSF in the Spotlight  
11:50 Agency Highlights  
11:55 Close

## Handouts

Agenda  
Minutes, January 2003 Meeting  
Minutes, December 2002 Meeting  
Minutes, International Working Group Meeting  
Minutes, Remote Sensing Applications Working Group  
Minutes, SDR Leadership Meeting with Dr. Olsen  
Natural Disaster Roundtable Invitation (NEHRP)  
Andy Bruzewicz' proposal for new members  
USFS Materials  
Agency presentations on CD-ROM

## **Call to Order**

Chair Helen Wood called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

## **Summary of Discussion**

### **1. Report from the Chair**

Chair Helen Wood reported on the meeting of SDR leadership and Dr. Kathie Olsen, Associate Director for Science, Office of Science and Technology Policy. Among other things, they addressed the Subcommittee's plan of action and outputs for FY2003, as well as opportunities in the International and Remote Sensing Application Working Groups. Dr. Olsen noted the SDR's advisory role to OSTP, Congress, and the Administration, and reiterated the opportunity for the Subcommittee to provide the best advice available. She also noted the Subcommittee's opportunity to indicate an opinion and to offer advice on the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP). Chair Helen Wood handed out a draft summary of the minutes from that meeting.

The Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (CENR) recently created a Task Force for International Earth Observational Systems, and assigned the group two tasks:

1. Create a framework and strategy for moving forward nationally and internationally; and
2. Organize an Earth Summit, tentatively scheduled for July 31, 2003.

Science ministers and others who can make substantive progress on this issue will be the primary guests at the Summit. SDR members agreed to host a workshop in conjunction with this summit, with a focus on observations for disaster reduction and sustainable development. SDR members recognized the constructive role the Subcommittee can play in the Earth Summit and that SDR should have representation in the Task Force. Chair Helen Wood is already involved, and will continue to share information with the Subcommittee. Ms. Wood also proposed that the SDR consider an Earth Observations Task Force of the SDR, an *ad hoc* group to review the materials to date and offer to help the CENR task force.

The SDR leadership will meet with other Subcommittee leaders, as well as the leadership of the CENR for a discussion of each of these topics within the next few weeks.

Peter Jutro mentioned that the Committee on Homeland Security and Terrorism met for the first time on January 10, 2003 led by OSTP Director Marburger. Mr. Jutro expressed concern that there may be overlap between the new Committee on Homeland Security and Terrorism, and the work of the Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction.

The next topic of the National Academy of Sciences Natural Disaster Roundtable is the National Earthquake Hazard Research Program (NEHRP): Accomplishments and Challenges (February 20, 2003, The National Academies). NEHRP is a 25-year collaboration between FEMA, USGS, NSF, NIST, and the February Roundtable is a discussion of the work accomplished by the Program. An invitation to the Roundtable was included in the meeting handouts.

### **Action**

- Secretariat to forward agenda and registration information for the February 20, 2003 Natural Disaster Roundtable celebrating 25 years of the National Earthquake Hazard Research Program (NEHRP): Accomplishments and Challenges. Information also is available on the National Academies web site:  
[http://www7.nationalacademies.org/ndr/NDR\\_events.html](http://www7.nationalacademies.org/ndr/NDR_events.html). Scroll to the bottom of the page for the "Seventh Roundtable Forum" and a link to the registration form.

- Secretariat to invite Craig Wingo, FEMA to present information on NEHRP and FEMA's role at the next meeting.
- Secretariat will forward SDR concept logos and instructions for viewing the new SDR web site.

## **2. Report from the OSTP Liaison**

Dr. Whitney emphasized the success and productivity of the meeting with Dr. Olsen, highlighting the good work of the Subcommittee to date, and reminding the members of the Subcommittee's focus on science and technology, research and development issues. Dr. Whitney also recommended the group invite Dr. Peter Ward, former member of the SDR, and current Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Partnership for Public Warning, to speak at a future meeting of the SDR. Dr. Ward and the Partnership for Public Warning recently issued a new report on public warnings.

### **Action**

- Secretariat to invite Dr. Ward to speak at a future meeting of the SDR.

## **3. Report from the International Working Group**

International Working Group (IWG) Co-chair Larry Roeder, Jr. reported on the recent activities of the Working Group. Referring to the January 27, 2003 minutes of the Working Group, Mr. Roeder highlighted several accomplishments of the Working Group, including: group agreement on the main purposes of the group; the planned visit of the ISDR Chair in April to talk about science and technology gaps in the current plan, and the general direction of the ISDR. Mr. Roeder clarified that the current plan for coordinating US participation in ISDR is for the Department of State to retain lead role for policy, while looking to the SDR for guidance on science and technology related matters.

### **Action**

- International Working Group to modify the Charter and present it to the March 2003 meeting of the SDR.

## **4. Report from the Remote Sensing Applications Working Group**

Dr. Rozalind Helz, Co-chair of the Remote Sensing Applications Working Group (RSAWG), reported on the recent activities of the Working Group. She highlighted conversations with David Applegate of the Senate Natural Hazards Caucus Working Group, and confirmed his interest in hosting a breakfast for congressional staffers to discuss the use of SAR for disaster support. The Working Group proposes to organize this briefing for April or May. Dr. Whitney reminded the Working Group members that all involvement with Congress must first be briefed to the congressional liaison for the Executive Office of the President.

The second draft of the SAR white paper will be circulated by the next meeting of the Working Group (March 4, 2003).

The members also discussed the International Charter: Space and Major Disasters, for which NOAA is the U.S. lead agency. The late March meeting of the Working Group will include a discussion of the International Charter, as well as the issues of facilitating SDR member agency

access to remote sensing data. The Working Group will also host a large meeting on the International Charter for user agencies. The meeting will feature informational briefings and workshops, and NOAA volunteered to lead the organization of this event.

**Action**

- SAR White Paper writing team to complete the second draft of the white paper and redistribute to Working Group members by the March 4, 2003 meeting of the group.

**5. Document to Supplement the President's FY2004 Budget**

The members discussed the first draft of the Document to Supplement the President's FY2004 Budget, currently scheduled for publication mid-April 2003.

Chair Helen Wood handed out a draft of "A Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction," the fourth section of the document. Several members noted that significant work is required to reach consensus on this aspect of the paper. Dr. Whitney suggested each agency identify science and technology gaps and needs related to disasters. The group agreed that this is an important exercise, but that there is not time for substantive execution given the timing this year. Instead, the group agreed to an extra-session meeting of the SDR, scheduled for February 7, 2003 at 1:30 pm EST.

**Action**

- The members will meet again on February 7, 2003 to refine the content for the Strategy and Recommendations section, and to reach agreement regarding timing for final approvals and distribution.

**6. United States Forest Service Briefing**

Dr. Susan Conard provided a briefing on the Forest Service (USFS) programs related to natural disaster reduction, particularly those relating to the National Fire Plan. Her briefing focused on USFS investments in watershed hydrology and sediment processes; weather and atmospheric interactions; forest health (including insects and disease); fire management and fire effects; risk assessment; and, of course, human impacts. The group briefly discussed the fire research coordinating council, noting that an excellent home for this council could be a task force under the SDR.

**Action**

- Copies of the "USFS in the Spotlight" CD will be available at the March meeting, or members may request a copy by sending an email to the Secretariat (dori@grs-solutions.com).

**7. Agenda Items and Other Communications with the Subcommittee**

Please send proposed agenda items and any other items intended for distribution to the full Subcommittee to Doris Akerman (dori@grs-solutions.com) by February 27, 2003.

## 8. Contact Information

### SDR Leadership

Helen Wood, Chair, 301-457-5120, helen.wood@noaa.gov  
John Filson, Co-Chair for Science, 703-648-6715, jfilson@usgs.gov  
Margaret Lawless, Co-Chair for Policy, 202-646-3027, margaret.lawless@fema.gov

### International Working Group

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Fernando Echavarría, Co-Chair, 202-663-2395, echavarrifa@state.gov  
Larry Weber, Co-Chair, 703-292-7240, lweber@nsf.gov

### Remote Sensing Applications Working Group

Rosalind Helz, Co-Chair, 703-648-6086, rhelz@usgs.gov  
Steve Ambrose, Co-Chair, 202-358-0851, sambrose@hq.nasa.gov

### Secretariat

Dori Akerman, 703-560-7448, dori@grs-solutions.com

## 9. Future Meetings

The SDR meets on the first or second Thursday of every month at 10am in the White House Conference Center. Upcoming meeting dates:

March 13, 2003	10am – 12pm	Eisenhower Room
April 10, 2003	10am – 12pm	Eisenhower Room
May 1, 2003	10am – 12pm	Eisenhower Room
June 5, 2003	10am – 12pm	Eisenhower Room
July 10, 2003	10am – 12pm	Eisenhower Room
August 7, 2003	10am – 12pm	Eisenhower Room
September 11, 2003	10am – 12pm	Eisenhower Room
October 2, 2003	10am – 12pm	Eisenhower Room
November 13, 2003	10am – 12pm	Eisenhower Room
December 4, 2003	10am – 12pm	Eisenhower Room

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15pm.